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OUR OVERSEAS BATTALION



ON THE WAY

OUR OVERSEAS BATTALION



TO send soldiers of Jesus Christ across the seas to non-Christian lands; to preach the gospel of divine love and of eternal life to a heathen people; to proclaim righteousness of character and devotion to truth as the ultimate goal of life; to reveal Jesus Christ and His indwelling spirit as the fundamental dynamic of righteousness; to win men and women and children from the dominating fear and superstitions of heathen religions and lead them into the uplifting love and enlarging liberty of the Kingdom of God; to establish the church, with its leavening power in the midst of the spiritual darkness and the moral chaos of idolatry, ancestor worship, and the like; to support such a movement with our prayers, our executive abilities, our money, and, when called for, our lives; to do these things is to dig deep and build firm and strong the bed-rock foundations of world peace and world brotherhood.

For if we do not make the *world* Christian we shall not have a world that is both peaceful and progressive. We might have one without the other, but no assurance of both together has yet been found save in Jesus Christ as leader.

To our Woman's Board has been given a definite service overseas, in Japan, and through our battalion "over there" we are attempting to do these things. Our sector of the fighting line includes the major portion of the Sendai Station, in Northeast Japan. Sendai, at the southern extremity of the station, is a city of one hundred thousand people, with ten Protestant churches, including our own. We should hold ourselves responsible for the spiritual regeneration of ten thousand of the people. Our church here is located on the main street, which traverses the city from end to end, and has one of the largest Sunday-schools in our Japan church and two smaller branch Sunday-schools within the city limits. The pastor, Rev. Kitano Takaya, has a large country district also, over which he itinerates as frequently as his heavy work will admit.

The Sendai Christian Orphanage, located about ten blocks from the church, is an interdenominational institution, and we have always had a share in its work, Mr. Kitano having been officially connected with it from its inception. He is now chairman of its incorporated body. Our missionary, too, has usually been connected with the Orphanage, and more or less linked up with the school life of the city, in addition to the direct work of the church. In addition to the usual preaching services, Sunday-school and prayer-meeting work of the church, both the church building, parsonage and mission home are the scenes of frequent Bible classes for different types of people. This is true of practically all such places throughout Japan. Sendai is the capital city of the

province in which it is located, and the educational center for all North East Japan, being the seat of one of the three Imperial Universities. Thus it is a strategic center for Christian work.

At the northern extreme of the Sendai station lies the town of Ichinoseki, capital of a county, with a population of eight thousand or more in the town itself and fifty-two thousand in the county, with our own and one other Protestant church in the county, thus laying upon us the task of evangelizing one-half of the people. Ichinoseki is the seat of the "Weston Memorial," which includes chapel, parsonage, and a spacious lot on which they stand, located centrally and advantageously for our work. The town has a middle school, corresponding in grade to our high schools, and a private school for girls above the ordinary grades.

The county is dotted with smaller villages, many of which have been visited irregularly by our pastors as time would admit, and some of which receive regular evangelistic visitation, and have made goodly contributions to the membership of the church at Ichinoseki. Our pastor there is Rev. Abe Kiyoshi, a young man of great promise, who has come into some recognition interdenominationally in Sunday-school work,

Similarly, the town of Wakuya, the home of the "Rowell Memorial" (chapel, parsonage, and about three-quarters of an acre of land) is the capital of its county, the center of a population of fifty thousand people (in the county) with but two churches

ministering to them, one of them being our own. Twenty-five thousand souls depending on Rev. and Mrs. Sakurai for spiritual enlightenment! Has any one considered to what a tremendous need that Rowell Memorial is ministering? The town itself has a population of eight thousand, and has two large grade schools, one of which is next door from our chapel. The second largest town in the county, Tajiri, visited regularly by Mr. Sakurai, has one of the most prosperous outpost organizations within our Mission. This is in part owing to Mr. Sakurai's faithful work, but even more largely to the devotion and faithfulness of a resident Christian widow, Mrs. Yoshida, who has practically turned her home into a working plant for Jesus.

At Iwaideyama, also a county capital, our work is the only Protestant work carried on, either in its own or in the contiguous county. Here are fifty-two thousand people without the Gospel except through the channel of our church at this place. We have no buildings, no equipments of any kind in this district, the work being carried on in rented property. Just at present we have no resident pastor there, Mr. Sakurai and others making regular visits to Iwaideyama and, to some extent, through the country districts.

Thus in the distinctive field supported by the Woman's Board one hundred thirteen thousand people are dependent upon us for a knowledge of the Gospel. To meet this responsibility we have four Japanese pastors (except that the Iwaideyama district is tem-

porarily without a pastor) with wives that have had the training to make them able assistants, and one missionary family.

Other places within the Sendai station, but not yet supported by the Woman's Boards, are:—Tsukidate, Iinogawa and Ishinomaki, each with their outpost districts, with a responsibility for the spiritual guidance of one hundred and seventy thousand people. Both Mr. Kitano and our missionary give a goodly portion of their time to these districts in addition to the places directly under the support of the Woman's Board.

In addition to this a number of other places, both in the Utsunomiya and Tokyo stations are supported by individual Woman's Societies of Conferences. In all, our Woman's Societies have a prominent part in the support of the work of nine pastors and two Bible Women in Japan, besides some help given to the Girls' School at Utsunomiya under Mrs. Fry's care.

It is to be expected that Christian women will be missionary women. All that woman has attained to in intellectual development; all that she has secured in the way of social recognition; all that has been granted to her of civic rights, and all that has been promised her in the line of worth while spiritual salvation has come to her through Jesus Christ. Without Him womankind in heathen lands are scarcely considered human, at least not in the way in which men consider themselves human. And woman's lot in

these lands is most sorrowful and full of suffering. To have lived under the blessings of Jesus and to have reached the exalted position of Christian womanhood and not carry the Gospel that has made us what we are to the women of heathen lands seems like a travesty upon our womanhood.

And we should rejoice also that the women of Japan are coming into their own and that such women as adorn the cover of this tract, wonderful women in their devotion to the cause of Jesus Christ in behalf of others, our missionaries tell us, are among those who make up our overseas battalion, and we should gladly maintain their work both by our prayers and by our multiplied gifts.

May we not look for goodly offerings from each woman of the Christian church who loves Jesus Christ and who appreciates what He has done for her enough to want other women to have a like blessing?

WOMAN'S BOARD FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH.
Dayton, Ohio.



MRS. KITANO

To Have Won
These Lives and to
Have Turned
Them Into
Channels of Service
for Jesus is,
Beyond Measure,
a Victory for
the Kingdom.



MRS. WATANABE